GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:748
ANSWERED ON:22.10.2008
TRADE ACROSS THE LOC
Francis George Shri K.;Panda Shri Prabodh

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to start trade across the Line of Control in Kashmir;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the modalities chalked out in this regard;

(c) the details of the routes and the commodities to be traded; and

(d) the benefits likely to accrue as a result thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS(SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE)

(a) Yes.

(b) & (c) Cross LoC trade on the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad and Poonch−Rawalakot routes commenced from 21st October 2008. Twenty-one items for trade have been identified for duty-free passage. Items to be traded from Salamabad to Chakoti and Chakandabagh to Rawalakot are carpets, rugs, wall hangings, shawls and stoles, fresh fruits and vegetables, aromatic plants, dry fruits including walnuts, Kashmiri spices, spring rubberised coir/foam mattresses, furniture including walnut furniture etc. Similarly, items to be traded from Chakoti to Salamabad and Rawalakot to Chakandabagh are rice, precious stones, dry fruits including walnuts, medicinal herbs, fresh fruits and vegetables, furniture including walnut furniture, carpets and rugs, embroidered items, foam mattresses, shawls and stoles.

(d) The expansion of people-to-people contacts, including through trade and commerce will provide an effective platform to develop and strengthen bilateral relations.